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HECTOR MCALLISTER IN NORTH CAROLINA, ARGYLL AND ARRAN: FAMILY AND MEMORY IN RETURN MIGRATION TO SCOTLAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

ALEXANDER MURDOCH

It is only recently that return migration has begun to attract attention from scholars of British migration, and most work that has been carried out has related to return migration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when European migrants benefited from improved transportation links across the Atlantic and further afield.¹ Return migration in the early modern period has received less attention.² The principal source for this article, the correspondence of Alexander McAllister of Cumberland County North Carolina, has survived in a collection of family papers that are now held in the North Carolina State Archives in Raleigh, North Carolina, USA. Alexander's older brother Hector returned to Scotland soon after the McAllister family had arrived in the Cape Fear Valley of North Carolina in 1739 on account of their parents' deaths. Some of this correspondence has been published previously as part of Bernard Bailyn's 'Peopling of British

¹ This article is based on a paper given at the 'Return to Caledonia' colloquium organised by the Scottish Centre for Diaspora Studies at the University of Edinburgh in May 2010. My thanks to Dr Mario Varricchio, organiser of the colloquium and editor of its proceedings, *Back to Caledonia: Scottish Homecomings from the Seventeenth Century to the Present* (Edinburgh, 2012). I am very grateful to Barbara DeWolfe of the William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan for her encouraging comments on an earlier draft of this essay, and for the anonymous readers reports provided through the *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*. I am also grateful to Dr Robert J. Cain of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History for so generously providing me with a microfilm of the McAllister correspondence in the North Carolina State Archives at Raleigh. This is just one of many debts I owe to him. A pioneering collection of essays that addressed the issue of return migration to Britain is M. Harper (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The Return Movement of Emigrants 1600–2000* (Manchester, 2005).

² See the essay by S. Murdoch, 'Children of the Diaspora: The "Homecoming" of the Second-Generation Scot in the Seventeenth Century' in Harper (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings*, and the essays by S. Murdoch, S. Talbott and K. Zickermann in Varricchio (ed.), *Back to Caledonia*.

North America' project.³ Bailyn read the letters written by the brothers on the eve of the American Revolution as a celebration of North Carolina by the younger McAllister brother, and through North Carolina, a celebration of America itself.⁴ No correspondence relevant to Hector McAllister's emigration and subsequent return has been identified in Scotland, although there are references to him in the Hamilton archives on deposit in the National Records of Scotland, because for most of his life he was a tenant on the Hamilton estate on the Isle of Arran in the Firth of Clyde, which will be discussed below. There are no references in any surviving records relating to his involvement in migration as a young man, his return migration and his involvement in plans for possible migration to North Carolina again as a married adult with a family.

How typical of return migration to Scotland from America was the experience of Hector McAllister? His correspondence with his brother is one of the most detailed sources we have relating to Scottish migration to North America in the eighteenth century, which is why it attracted the attention of Professor Bailyn. Recent scholarship on migrant letters has made it possible to read this particular surviving correspondence in a manner which adds to our knowledge of the broader significance of what it represents as a text, as well as its specific context both in terms of Scottish settlement in North Carolina and the impact of economic and social change on migration from Scotland in the eighteenth century.⁵ Major studies of Irish migrant letters from America and Australia have demonstrated how much can be done to contextualise and shed light on the surviving letters, through painstaking research on other sources.⁶ In addition, David Gerber has emphasised the intensely personal nature of much migrant correspondence. Gerber has written that the emigrant letter 'conceived transnationally, [...] becomes a unique social space that exists neither in the homeland nor the land of resettlement, but in a third place that is, in effect, in both simultaneously.'⁷ He has used some of the insights of the great historian of British emigration to the USA, Charlotte Erickson, whose collection of British

³ See B. Bailyn, *The Peopling of British North America: An Introduction* (New York, 1986), now succeeded by the International Seminar on the History of the Atlantic World, 1500–1825 at Harvard University www.fas.harvard.edu/~atlantic/, accessed 5 Feb. 2013.

⁴ B. Bailyn with B. DeWolfe, *Voyagers to the West: Emigration from Britain to America on the Eve of the Revolution* (New York and London, 1986 and 1987), p. 504. See I. K. Steele, 'Review Article: J. P. Greene and P. D. Morgan (eds), *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (2009)', *American Historical Review*, 114:5 (2009), p. 1406. Also see B. DeWolfe (ed.), *Discoveries of America: Personal Accounts of British Emigrants to North America during the Revolutionary Era* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 27–37, 170–83.

⁵ D. Gerber, *Authors of Their Lives: The Personal Correspondence of British Immigrants to North America in the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 2006).

⁶ D. Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation: Personal Accounts of Irish Migration to Australia* (Cork, Ireland, 1994); K. Miller et al (eds), *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary America, 1675–1815* (Oxford, 2003).

⁷ B. Elliott, D. Gerber and S. Sinke, 'Introduction' in Elliott et al (eds), *Letters Across Borders: The Epistolary Practices of International Migrants* (New York, 2006), p. 12. This collection of essays is more relevant to the McAllister series than literary studies such as Bruce Redford, *The Converse of the Pen: Acts of Intimacy in the Eighteenth-Century Familiar Letter* (Chicago, 1986).

emigrant letters of the nineteenth century, *Invisible Immigrants*, led her to question 'a Marxian emphasis on overriding economic causes for emigration.'⁸ Erickson observed that 'in gradually piecing together life histories,' she often was 'struck with the frequency with which the death of a wife, husband, or parent, a desire to end a marriage, [...] lay in the immediate background to the decision to emigrate.'⁹ It is the contention of this case study that there is much in the McAllister correspondence that supports Professor Erickson's argument.

Gerber's studies of nineteenth-century British migrant correspondence from the United States has added substance to Erickson's insight. Much of the relevant secondary literature, he has pointed out, 'has [...] privileged ethnicity at the expense of understanding issues of personal identity.'¹⁰ The correspondence of the McAllister brothers over forty years demonstrates their continuing sense of shared family identity despite the divergent paths each took on opposite sides of the Atlantic. In Hector's case, there was serious consideration over whether reuniting his own nuclear family with extended family in North Carolina might better their prospects than continued residence in Scotland. Whether his spouse and children shared this concern is impossible to establish given their marginal role in the archived correspondence, which includes copies of most of the letters Alexander attempted to send to Hector from North Carolina, as well as letters he received from Hector written from the Isle of Arran in Scotland. Gerber has pointed out that migrant 'letters were less objective, factual reports [...] than devices for sustaining relationships and in doing so, confirming identities.' He has argued that 'what is true or authentic about these identities is that they sustained the individual letter-writer's desire to maintain a bond with the reader that achieves continuity' and that 'faithfulness lay in the commitment to continue the correspondence.'¹¹ In other words, migrant letters do not represent literal evidence any more than the quantitative estimates relating to trade and migration in early modern history represent accurate statistics.¹² Nevertheless, migrant correspondence can tell us much about 'the forging and maintenance of the networks by which chain migrations were planned and executed, resources exchanged, and families reunited.'¹³ Hector McAllister never reversed his return migration to Scotland, but his surviving correspondence with his brother in North Carolina documents that his very presence in Scotland was an important influence in establishing a strong connection between southwest Scotland and North Carolina that survived,

⁸ C. Erickson, *Leaving England: Essays on British Emigration in the Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca, New York, 1994), p. 24; C. Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in 19th Century America* (Leicester, 1972).

⁹ Erickson, *Leaving England*, p. 25.

¹⁰ Gerber, *Authors*, p. 64.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹² See S. Murdoch and E. Mijers, 'Migrant Destinations, 1500–1750' in T. M. Devine and J. Wormald, (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Scottish History* (Oxford, 2012), p. 320.

¹³ Gerber, *Authors*, pp.112–13.

albeit on a small scale, into the nineteenth century.¹⁴ It was a migration from one rural area to another, made possible by the commercial shipping that connected (not necessarily directly) the Clyde estuary in Scotland with the southeastern North American ports of Charleston in South Carolina, Wilmington in North Carolina and Savannah in Georgia, and almost certainly was maintained as part of continuing Scottish trade with the British Caribbean.¹⁵

Hector McAllister was about twenty-three years old when he accompanied his father and mother, younger brother Alexander, and sisters Mary, Grisell and Isabel to the Cape Fear River Valley of North Carolina in the autumn of 1739.¹⁶ They left the Kintyre peninsula in Argyll in Scotland along with other families from the mainland and the adjacent islands of Islay, Jura and Gigha. This was a region where commercial pressures affected land values and agriculture earlier than was the case elsewhere in Scotland, partly because communications by sea were good both with ports in Ayrshire as well as with Greenock and Port Glasgow on the river Clyde. There were also connections with ports in the north of Ireland such as Larne and Belfast, giving access to expertise in the organisation of the transportation of emigrants to America. The wealthy second duke of Argyll was intent on transforming the management of his expanding estate in Scotland during the 1730s to promote commercial agriculture, increase cash income from farm rentals and reduce the dependence of the estate on Campbell clan gentry.¹⁷ The latter traditionally had looked to the duke both for patronage and leadership on the basis of kinship whereas the duke had become a wealthy aristocrat whose military and political career had taken him and his immediate family to the very highest echelons of the expanding British state.¹⁸

Hector McAllister's father, Coll, had inherited the lands of Ballinakill in Kintyre, at Clachan near Tarbert. He sold some of these to help finance his family's emigration. There is no record as to why he took this decision, but it appears likely that it was related to the policy of expansion adopted by the Argyll estate, as well as to the commercial impact of agrarian improvement.¹⁹ The ships that took the

¹⁴ For example, see National Records of Scotland [hereafter NRS], CE82/1/18, 6 Mar. 1805, Collector of Customs, Campbeltown to Scottish Board of Customs; CE 82/1/34, 1 Sep. 1820, Collector of Customs, Campbeltown to Scottish Board of Customs.

¹⁵ See D. J. Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World, 1750–1820* (Manchester, 2005), ch. 4.

¹⁶ B. De Wolfe (ed.), *Discoveries of America: Personal Accounts of British Emigrants to North America during the Revolutionary Era* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 171.

¹⁷ E. Cregeen, 'The Changing Role of the House of Argyll in the Scottish Highlands' in N.T. Phillipson and R. Mitchison (eds), *Scotland in the Age of Improvement* (Edinburgh, 1970 and 1996), pp. 5–23.

¹⁸ A. Murdoch, 'Campbell, John, second duke of Argyll and duke of Greenwich (1680–1743)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed 5 Sept. 2012.

¹⁹ The best work on agrarian change in Argyll in this period is still E. Cregeen, 'The Tacksmen and Their Successors', *Scottish Studies*, 13 (1969), pp. 93–144. For a recent summary of the current historiography see R. Dodgshon, 'The Clearances and the Transformation of the Scottish Countryside' in the *Oxford Handbook of Modern Scottish History*, pp. 130–1, 145, 151, and 154.

McAllister family to North Carolina, as part of the party of about 300 people who left Argyll in 1739, were chartered from merchants at Larne in Ireland and the emigration was reported in the Belfast press.²⁰ The ability to raise capital through the sale of inherited lands, made possible by the commercialisation of agriculture in Argyll at this time, not only made emigration viable but also enabled wealthier emigrants to acquire land at their destination. Hector McAllister's experience of return migration would be defined by his belief in his right to the privileges of land ownership his family had secured in North Carolina and the negligible amount of land to which he could claim ownership in Kintyre after his return to Scotland.

Hector's father was one of the leaders of the group of emigrants who arrived in North Carolina in 1740 named in a petition to the General Assembly (the lower house of the colonial legislature) preserved in the North Carolina archives.²¹ They sought financial help as 'Scotch Gentlemen' who had 'several poor people brought into this province.'²² In fact there were several hundred people involved in this migration, which is one reason it was brought to the attention of the North Carolina General Assembly. Relief from taxation for ten years was approved as well as possible payment of money 'to Duncan Campbell, Dugald McNeal, Daniel McNeal, Coll McAllister and Neal McNeal, Esqrs to be by them distributed among the several families.'²³ Coll McAllister received a relatively large grant of land from the colonial legislature on the basis of 'headright' (the number of people he had brought with him for settlement in the North Carolina colony) and he was appointed with his other four named colleagues by the legislature as an additional magistrate for Bladen County in North Carolina, where they took up their lands, thus giving him civil as well as social and economic status within the new settlement.

North Carolina was far from the epicentre of British North America in the middle of the eighteenth century.²⁴ A Bristol merchant and shipmaster who was related to the MacNeills (or McNeals, as recorded in North Carolina) of Lossit near Machrihanish in Kintyre wrote to them in 1738 that:

[. . .] in your Last to me att Bristol you mentioned Severall of our Relations that Deseigned to come to America and Settle in North Carolina. I wish they may have the Desired Success but I assure you that Province is remarkable for

²⁰ A. Murdoch, *British Emigration, 1603–1914* (Basingstoke, 2004), p. 42.

²¹ W.L. Saunders (ed.), *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*, Vol. IV (Raleigh, 1886), pp. 489–90.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 532–3.

²⁴ B. J. Wood, *This Remote Part of the World: Regional Formation in Lower Cape Fear, North Carolina, 1725–1775* (Columbia, 2004), esp. ch. 2 and ch. 3; A. R. Ekirch, 'Poor Carolina': *Politics and Society in Colonial North Carolina, 1729–1776* (1981), esp. ch. 1, 'The Limits of Growth', and ch. 2, 'Carolina Society and Culture', including sections entitled 'Very few if any rich people' and 'Less of what is called politeness and good-breeding'.

knaves and villains of all sorts. I was once in No Carolina and found the People of that Cuntry to be the worst Sett of Men I every knew.²⁵

Yet the initial emigration from Argyll had not been undertaken without planning, as the author of the above text acknowledged in observing that ‘however as Neill Du of Gigaia [of Ardeley on Gigha in Argyll, recorded as Neal McNeal in North Carolina in 1740] has been there no Doubt he is a better Judge of both People and Cuntry Than I can be.’²⁶ Nevertheless, the writer argued that his relation’s son could do better than emigrate to North Carolina: ‘as there is a probability of a war I shoud think it better for Charles to apply himself to the sea than to Come empty handed to settle in a poor barren province.’²⁷

The fortunes of the children of the McAllister family in North Carolina were altered after the deaths of both of their parents during 1740, or shortly thereafter. It was at this time that the eldest of the children there, Hector, returned to Scotland, where their elder sister had remained. The reasons for Hector’s return are not clear, but appear to have involved inheritance issues arising from his father’s death that related to property in Scotland. As the family’s eldest son, Hector would have had a direct interest. Other factors may have related to the arrangements the family had made for the support of Hector’s and Alexander’s unmarried eldest sister ‘Anny’, who had not travelled with the family to North Carolina.²⁸ All of the resources realised by the sale of lands at Ballinakill, for example, may not have been transported with the family to North Carolina, although this cannot be established. The earliest surviving letter in the McAllister correspondence is undated. It is a copy to record dispatch of the original, in which Hector’s younger brother stated that ‘I cannot express the grief and melancholy I am under on the account of your Long Absence, and what greatly increases it is the thoughts of your confinement contrary to your expectations and Inclinations’, as well as the fact that ‘it gives me and your other friends Great plessure to heer of your bing admitted to the conjugal state.’ It concludes with the news that ‘your Sisters Still Continues here very Dutifull and Join me in their kind Respects to you and all your Consort, and Earnestly pray for your quick and Safe return to the Great Comfort and joy of us all.’²⁹

Many years later, in late 1770, Alexander expressed impatience at the most recent of several unfulfilled promises by Hector to return to North Carolina to

²⁵ NRA, MacNeal Papers Survey 2749, Hector McNeil to Neil McNeil of ‘uggadele’ [Kintyre], Boston, July 2d 1738. I would like to record my appreciation of the courtesy and hospitality I received from the then owners of this small collection of manuscripts when I consulted it in 1989.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ North Carolina Division of Archives and History [hereafter NCDAH], McAllister Family Papers, PC1738, letter #26 1771.

²⁹ NCDAH, McAllister Family Papers, letter #1, Alexander McAllister to Hector McAllister, n.d. [attributed in catalogue to 1747].

join his family there.³⁰ Hector responded in a letter dated September of 1771, in which he declared that ‘the loss and expence I sustained by my being detained here, can not get lifted at this distance of time, as the lawyers whome I employed for that reason are not in being nor the Judge or Clerk of the Court. I was twelve months in a manner prisoner tho not confined.’³¹ Suggestions by some scholars that Hector had been accused of Jacobitism are sustained by his inclusion in a list of those suspected of involvement in the 1745 rebellion compiled by British government Excise officers in Scotland: in this list Hector’s occupation is listed as ‘Mercht’ [merchant].³² The same list includes members of the Fullarton family to whom he soon became linked by marriage.³³ Hector had not returned to his family’s former lands and his McAllister relations in Kintyre when he returned to Scotland, but instead took up residence on the Hamilton estate on Arran. Was this an indication of less than complete admiration for the dominance of the Argyll estate in Kintyre by the 1740s? There is little known of the circumstances of his marriage, but this clearly gave him access to tacksman and small landholder networks on Arran, where he was to spend the rest of his life.

Hector was not the only Argyll emigrant to North Carolina in 1739 to return to Scotland in the 1740s. Duncan Campbell of Kilduskland, just outside Lochgilphead in Knapdale, also returned to Scotland and attended the Presbytery of Kintyre in 1748 to present a petition that a Gaelic-speaking Church of Scotland minister be sent to attend the spiritual needs of the ‘Argyle Collony’ in North Carolina.³⁴ Earlier that decade the Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge had received a similar request unattributed to any specific individual, although Campbell of Kilduskland was one of the five men named in the North Carolina legislative records in 1740 as a leader of the immigrants from Argyll. He had appeared before the Presbytery of Inveraray as early as November 1741 to appeal for the dispatch of a Gaelic-speaking minister to the colony,

³⁰ NCDAB, McAllister Family Papers, letter #21, Alexander McAllister to Hector McAllister, 29 Nov.–6 Dec. 1770, published in DeWolfe, *Discoveries*, pp. 173–6. The quotation is from my own transcription of the manuscript.

³¹ NCDAB, McAllister Family Papers, letter #26, Hector McAllister to Alexander McAllister, 12 Sept. 1771.

³² T. Campbell, *Arran: A History* (Edinburgh, 2007), p. 112. See W. MacLeod (ed.), *A List of Persons Concerned in The Rebellion transmitted to the Commissioners of Excise by the several Supervisors in Scotland in Obedience to a General Letter of the 7th May 1746 and a supplementary list with evidences to prove the same* (Edinburgh, 1890), pp. 326–7: ‘A List of Persons from Argyle South Collection, Concern’d in the Rebellion, with evidences: ‘Hector M’Alister, Mert in Glencoy in Arran.’ Those identifying Hector M’Alister as concerned in the rebellion are given as ‘Archibald Paterson a Rebell in Congary in Islay & Don. More M’Alister in Surn in Islay also a Rebell.’

³³ MacLeod (ed.), *A List of Persons Concerned in The Rebellion*, pp. 326–7 and 357. ‘Adam Fullerton, Brewer in Brodick, in Arran and James Bain Fullarton, Mert in Glencoy in Arran’ are included, recorded as identified by ‘Pat. Gray, Taylor in Brodick in Arran & Wm Maitland Surgeon there, both Rebels.’ ‘James Bain Fullarton’ very possibly became known later as ‘James Fullarton of Corse’, as Hector McAllister’s father-in-law was known.

³⁴ NRS, Church of Scotland records, CH2/1153, 244–6, Presbytery of Kintyre minutes, 14 Jan. 1748.

arranged for the sale of his lands there c.1756 and later went to join his brother as a merchant in Jamaica, having sold the Kilduskland estate to help finance the 1739/1740 adventure to North Carolina.³⁵ Clearly, however, the farming families who made up most of the numbers in this enterprise, once in America, did not have access to the resources available to the wealthier families led by Duncan Campbell, Coll McAllister and the other men who were responsible for organising the shipping that made the emigration possible.

It was access to these resources that made it possible for Hector McAllister to return to Scotland after the deaths of his parents in North Carolina, leaving his younger siblings in the care of relations who remained in the settlement. He married Mary Fullarton at some point after his return to Scotland, identified as a member of the family of Fullarton 'of Corse' by descendants of their children.³⁶ When John Burrel of West Lothian was carrying out his survey of farms on Arran in 1766 as part of planning for new leases, he noted in relation to the farm of Tormore that 'James Fullarton of corse excluded in an express clause in the last Tack from any Tack or share of Tack or possession of Arran came & mad offer to produce four sufficient Tennents for the farm @ £48 Rent & offer himself caution for payment of the Rent.'³⁷ There are frequent references to Fullarton of Corse in the Bute Sheriff Court records (Arran along with the neighbouring island of Bute were subject to a Scottish Sheriff Court at Rothesay separate from those for the larger counties of Argyll and Ayrshire that surrounded them) to 'James Fullarton of Corse'.³⁸ Although most of the island of Arran was part of the vast estate of the duke of Hamilton, a family named Fullarton was the only other considerable landowner on the island.³⁹ This suggests that Hector McAllister had married into a gentry family. With most of his own family's land in Kintyre sold

³⁵ Saunders (ed.), *Colonial Records of North Carolina, Vol. IV*, pp. 489–90; R. J. Cain (ed.), *Records of the Executive Council, 1735–1754, Volume VIII of the Colonial Records of North Carolina* [Second Series] (Raleigh, 1994), pp. xviii–xx; NRS, Church of Scotland records, CH2/190/2, Presbytery of Inveraray minutes, 27 Feb., 3 and 21 Apr. 1739, and 3 Nov. 1741, pp. 346–51, 354–58, 386–7. For Kilduskland in Jamaica, see NRS, Court of Session records, Extracted Processes, CS21/1771/10/8, John Macdonald of Largie Esquire v Dugald MacTavish of Dunardry and Patrick Campbell of Knap, 16 Dec. 1771. MacTavish was arrested as a rebel in Scotland in 1745 but benefited from the general pardon issued by the government in 1747, a situation that was very likely similar to that in which Hector McAllister found himself in 1746. See Sir J. Fergusson, *Argyll in the Forty-Five* (London, 1951), pp. 34–5, 43 and 57.

³⁶ W. P. Ker (ed.), 'Mr Hutcheson's "Journal," 1783,' *Scottish Historical Review*, 16, 1 (1919), p. 92.

³⁷ NRA, RH4/19, microfilm of John Burrel's Arran Journal in a private collection, p. 17, entry for 3 Jun. 1766. The text of this journal was published privately in 1982 as *John Burrel's Arran journal*, 2 vol, edited by Lady Jean Fforde. There are copies in Edinburgh University Library Special Collections and the National Library of Scotland.

³⁸ www.scottishhandwriting.com/18cT7A.asp, accessed 19 July 2012 (1750 and 1769). Also see NRA, SC 8/46/1, Rothesay (Bute) Sheriff Court Regist of Bonds 6 May 1761–24 Dec. 1779, which refers to Fullarton of Corse on p. 89 (1766), p. 113 (1767), pp. 118–19 (1767), p. 132 (1768), p. 158 (1769), p. 183 at bill protested signed at 'Monyquil' on Arran (1770). SC8/3/1 'Diet Book of The Sherif Court of Bute', 11 Aug 1768 and 27 July and 10 August 1769 also records references to 'James Fullarton of Corse'.

³⁹ Campbell, *Arran*, p. 172.

and his closest relative in Scotland an unmarried sister in residence with another family, Hector apparently had no alternative in Scotland to residence near his wife's family.⁴⁰ It is clear from his correspondence with his brother, however, that he harboured ambitions of returning to North Carolina and residing on his own lands there.

Hector's earliest surviving letter to his brother in North Carolina is dated 26 June 1754 and gives his place of residence as 'Moniquill', a farm on the Hamilton estate on Arran in the narrow glen west of Brodick along which the only inland road ran across the island to its west coast. Hector did not discuss how he farmed in Arran in his correspondence with his brother, but John Burrel, the West Lothian surveyor employed by the tutors of the Hamilton Estate to negotiate new leases and promote agrarian improvement on Arran in the 1760s, reported on his negotiations with Hector McAllister in the journal he kept to document his activity on Arran. In his entry of 28 October 1766 he recorded his survey of the farms of 'Monnyquill' and 'Glaster', commenting that 'If the present Taxman is preferred to a new Tack and shall give the [rent] we Think it worth its our opinion he should be continued.'⁴¹ Although McAllister held both farms, the tack of Monnyquill expired with crop 1769 whereas that for Glaster ran to 1770. Although McAllister was farming livestock, his tenants also sowed grain, as Burrel recorded in some detail:

This two Farms Contains 103 acres of ploughed Land 147 acres of Meadow and 881 acres of Tollerable good pasture making in whole the No of 990 acres within the Head Dyke. Their Two Farms are presently pofest by 7 tennants who declares that at a Medium [sic] they annually sow 32 Bolls grain That they hold 20 horses 68 Milk Cows 60 yell Beasts [cattle] & 29 score sheep.⁴²

Burrel did not appear to regard McAllister as tacksman and his tenants as practicing primitive agriculture (note the number of sheep he recorded), writing that 'the only immediate Improvement we can think of these two Farms is to Inclose and subdivide into 3 Inclosures the whole of the low ground' of more than 300 acres. Only one of the three divisions was to be 'under Labour' at any one time and not to be cropped for more than three years in succession 'and always to sow Clover and Rye grafs with the third Crops.'⁴³ The big issue did not appear to be the farming but the proposed rise in rent. McAllister paid just over £25 Sterling at the time of the survey. Burrel valued the farms at over £100 but reported that Hector McAllister 'makes an Offer to us of Forty-Eight pound sterling of Yearly Rent & at the same time Declares that he neither Can or ever will offer a

⁴⁰ M. MacBride, *Arran of the Bens, the Glens and the Brave* (London, 1911), p. 48.

⁴¹ NRA, RH4/19, (NRA(S) Survey 331), microfilm of John Burrel's Arran journal, pp. 54–5.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 55–6.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 56 and p. 41 regarding the farm of Wester Bennan.

farthing more for them'.⁴⁴ By 1770 he had agreed to £60 a year for a three year lease. Three years later, in 1773, he had given up both farms and taken the newly created farm of East Glencoy, closer to Brodick, and by 1783 he and his family were in Brodick and part of an expanding settlement by the pier for the ferry to Ayrshire.

What Hector did write about to his brother in 1754, in some detail, was the organisation of emigration to North Carolina. Although Hector's plans to organise an emigration in the manner of his father fifteen years previously were not realised, we now know from other sources that another group of emigrants did leave Scotland for North Carolina in 1754. Indeed, Hector wrote in his letter that he had heard that Captain Neil Campbell had been disappointed of 'passengers' from the Isle of Jura, and that he had sent 'the bearer Neill Munrow' to Jura to ask Campbell to take his ship to Campbeltown in Kintyre '& I would engage to get him his complement, but it seems he gets from Jura as many as he can accommodate.'⁴⁵ This implies that 'Neill Munrow' not only went to Jura to contact Neil Campbell, but after returning to Arran to report to Hector McAllister on the negotiations, sailed to Jura and joined the emigrant party there recorded in Argyll Sheriff Court records and the Campbeltown Customs outport books as bound for 'Cape Fair in North Carolina.'⁴⁶ In Sheriff Court records Neil Campbell was identified as 'Master & Owner of the Ship called the Mary of Glasgow', yet in a 1777 Scottish Court of Session process there is a deposition from a Belfast merchant named James Getty which referred to Neil Campbell as 'of Black River Jamaica' and attested that he had in 1754 bought provisions from Getty in Belfast for an emigrant voyage to America on his ship the 'Mary'.⁴⁷ However, the Campbeltown Customs outport books for 1754 contain no reference to Campbell in the relevant entry for the Mary of Glasgow. Archibald McLarty was recorded as master (but not owner) of the vessel, just as he was when it landed a cargo of tar from North Carolina at Dumfries the following summer, in July 1755.⁴⁸

What does this tell us about Hector and his interest in emigration? He clearly had access to capital, and was hoping not only to return with his family to North

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 62.

⁴⁵ NCDAB, McAllister Family Papers, letter #4, Hector McAllister to Alexander McAllister, 26 June 1754.

⁴⁶ NRS, Argyll Sheriff Court Papers, SC54/2/71, Petition for Archd Campbell of Jura, 17 June 1754; NRS, Campbeltown Customs Collector's Quarterly Accounts Sept. 1748–Oct. 1757, E.504/8/2, Goods Outwards, Entry 2, July 9, 1754: 'In the Mary of Glasgow Archibald McLarty master for Cape Fair in North Carolina.'

⁴⁷ NRS, Court of Session Papers, Unextracted processes, CS230/Mc/4/4, McNiel v. Campbell 1777, James Getty to John Campbell [tacksman of Ardnave on Islay, and brother-in-law to Neil Campbell], Belfast, 13 Mar. 1776: 'Neil Campbell from Black-river in Jamaica came here many years ago to victual a Brig Archd McLarty master – Intended for some part of America.'

⁴⁸ NRS, E.504/9/2, Dumfries Customs Collectors' Quarterly Accounts, Sept. 1748–Oct. 1756, General Goods Inwards, Entry 44, 9 July 1755: 'Imported in the Mary of Glasgow. Archibald McLarty, Master, from North Carolina. [For] Edward & Roberts Maxwells & Co. Tar.'

Carolina, but also to turn a profit on the voyage by bringing trade goods with him. He was in correspondence with merchants in Campbeltown (but not Greenock on the Clyde) about shipping, and asked his brother to

advise me what goods from this place will answer your markets best [...] also advise me of the price of Tarr [...] and as the merchts of Campbeltown propose to send Bale goods with the vessel let me know if they can get a cargoe for the west Indies of lumber always ready or what freight they may have for such a voyage.⁴⁹

He wrote that 'the reason of my desiring this, is that they will incline to have the return of their Goods by the ship & while the Cargoe would be getting ready they might make a trip to the west Indies.'⁵⁰ Hector also wanted to know whether it would be more profitable 'to lay out a little money in servts or goods, or what the law in that Country will make a servt that does not come under Indentures here, when I pay his passage.'⁵¹ This is very much the correspondence of a merchant for whom indentured servants were as much a commercial cargo as 'bale goods'. A trading voyage in partnership with merchant contacts at Campbeltown in Kintyre would help to finance his own and his family's emigration. His conclusion that 'I have little news to give you, the lairds here are much afraid to have their lands waste & give [evil?] Characters of all that country but you shoud all write home the best encouragement you can with truth give' related to his interest in marketing migrant shipping in the southwest Highlands in the face of landowner opposition, which had not yet attracted the government concern to prevent emigration that would be apparent by 1772.⁵² By that time the brothers were still corresponding on the market for and price of labour in North Carolina and the possible gain to be had from supplying skilled labour there. In 1774 Alexander advised Hector that if he did come to North Carolina, he should 'bring some tradesmen with you for they will be of service to you such as a wiver [weaver] a Blacksmith Shumaker & Carpenter.'⁵³ He hoped Hector would also bring a cooper, 'for I have one Negrow boy a cooper & for want of one being with him he does not do me half work.'⁵⁴ These are details that give us some idea of the economic calculations Hector was attempting to make in considering emigration

⁴⁹ NCDAB, McAllister Family Papers, letter #4, Hector McAllister to Alexander McAllister, 26 June 1754.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid. For British government opposition to emigration see A. Murdoch, *British Emigration*, pp. 53–4, 56; A. Murdoch, 'Emigration from the Scottish Highlands to America in the Eighteenth Century', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 21:2 (1998), pp. 166ff.; Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West*, ch. 2.

⁵³ NCDAB, McAllister Family Papers, letter #36, Hector McAllister to Alexander McAllister, 31 May 1774.

⁵⁴ Ibid. See the discussion of coopers held in slavery in North Carolina in Wood, *This Remote Part of the World*, pp. 207, 212–14, 234.

for a second time, but they tell us little about his motivation in considering it as an option.

It is clear from his correspondence that McAllister continued to be dissatisfied with his life on Arran in Scotland, and that he expressed that dissatisfaction in his letters to his brother.⁵⁵ An undated letter (that survives only in a damaged state in which much of the text has been lost) contains the sentence that 'I have all the inclination in the world to return to Cape Fear but cannot get my wife prevailed with on account of the war,' which dates the text to sometime between 1756 and 1763.⁵⁶ Hector also wrote of trying for 'some commission that would enable me to support my family as they are now growing up—they are all of the female sex save Charles and no less than six in number.'⁵⁷ Hector's wife Mary wrote to Alexander in a letter dated 1 February 1764, urging him to remarry after the death of his first wife and added the postscript that 'could you venture to send one of your Boys to Hectors care I would take the Same care of him as of my own.'⁵⁸ This passage suggests issues of gender and inheritance that were so strong in Scottish society at this time.⁵⁹ It may suggest that Hector thought of emigration as improving the marriage prospects of his six daughters, but also that Mary McAllister would have preferred to receive a nephew in Arran rather than emigrate to join his extended family. The contrasting fortunes of Hector's sisters in North Carolina and their relatively advantageous marriages with the fortunes of his elder sister, a never married woman who spent the majority of her adult life as a servant/companion living with another gentry family in the west of Scotland, may have provided additional motivations for Hector.⁶⁰

By 1774 Hector McAllister had resolved on emigration to America, which would allow him to take up the land in North Carolina he had acquired thirty years previously, although there is evidence in the correspondence that this would not be quite as straightforward as Hector thought. His brother had written in 1767 that if Hector had no intention of returning to North Carolina, he should sell his land there to him, and that he could send some of the tar he was producing

⁵⁵ Ibid., letter #1, Alexander McAllister to Hector McAllister, n.d. [attributed in catalogue to 1747].

⁵⁶ Ibid., letter #5, Hector McAllister to Alexander McAllister, n.d. [catalogue gives date of 1761].

⁵⁷ NRS, Ibid. E.504/28/10, Greenock Customs Collector's Quarterly Accounts, records the departure of the 'Caesar' Captain Hume master on 20 Sept. 1761, mentioned in McAllister letter #5. The fact that Hector chose to name his eldest son 'Charles' may have related to his former sympathies in 1745 after his return to Scotland and his marriage into the Fullarton family.

⁵⁸ NCDAB, McAllister Family Papers, letter #7, Mary McAllister to Alexander McAllister, 1 Feb. 1764.

⁵⁹ See S. Nenadic, *Lairds and Luxury: The Highland Gentry in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2007), ch. 5, 'Gentlewomen'; and K. Glover, *Elite Women and Polite Society in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Woodbridge, 2011), pp. 20–3, 88–94.

⁶⁰ A. Duncan, 'The Sword and the Pen: The Role of Correspondence in the Advancement Tactics of Eighteenth-Century Military Officers' in *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 29, 2 (2009), pp. 106–22. Genealogical information documenting the marriages of two of Hector's sisters (the third in North Carolina remained unmarried) can be found in Douglas F. Kelly, *Carolina Scots* (Dillon, 1998).

on his plantation in payment.⁶¹ In 1770, in a long letter dated 29 November to 6 December, Alexander had urged Hector 'to quit the thoughts of Ever pretending to Com or put one a resolution with god permission nothing but death would stope you for the Sunner you Com the better.'⁶² He wrote that 'if you dly [delay] much longer you cannot expect to See your famile wel Settled,' adding that 'you must be one the decline, moreover you are a great hindrance to many a poor man in your predending always to Com & never com & as you have ben in this Country & must know more about it than those that is Strengers to the ways of it.'⁶³ Alexander's rebuke that 'with god permission nothing but death would stope you' from emigrating would acquire cruel significance four years later when Hector wrote that he has been detained from emigration in the summer of 1774 (at the age of 57) by the death of his son by drowning in February.⁶⁴ 'It is not in my power to tell the distress and affliction the shocking news gave my famylie and friends,' Hector wrote, 'particularly the poor Mother, who still continues inconsolable.'⁶⁵ Financial obligations Hector had undertaken on behalf of his son were 'the greatest hindrance of my getting clear to be with you this season and believe Dr Brother I shall never think myself happy this side of time until I see you & my friends in Carolina where I hope while I live to breath the air of liberty & not want the necessaries of life.'⁶⁶ It was in that context that Hector wrote the words Bernard Bailyn quoted to such effect.⁶⁷ Alexander kept a copy of his reply to his brother, which is undated: 'you may be shure ther is nothing would give me greater satisfaction than once moor to see you & famile safe and in North Carolina,' he wrote, 'tho I am Duitefull [doubtful] [. . .] that we will every meet.'⁶⁸

By 1774 North Carolina, and in particular the Cape Fear Valley of southeastern North Carolina, was far from what it had been in 1740 when Hector McAllister had seen it. As Bradford Wood has argued, 'during the early and middle eighteenth century the entire colony of North Carolina was involved in an enormous population movement into the southern backcountry', estimating that the population grew from perhaps 35,000 to 185,000 people.⁶⁹ Hector McAllister's letters to his brother demonstrate that he was no friend to the 'leards' in Scotland, and by implication no friend to the Hamilton Estate on Arran, just as his father Coll had taken the decision to emigrate (we can but assume) at

⁶¹ NCDAH, McAllister Family Papers, letter #9, Alexander McAllister to Hector McAllister, n.d. [catalogue attributes date of 1767].

⁶² Ibid., letter #21, Alexander McAllister to Hector McAllister, 29 Nov.–6 Dec. 1770. This quotation is from my own transcription of the manuscript.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid., letter #36, Hector McAllister to Alexander McAllister, 31 May 1774.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Bailyn, *Voyagers*, p. 506.

⁶⁸ NCDAH, McAllister Family Papers, letter #36. Hector McAllister to Alexander McAllister, n.d. [catalogue attributes date of 1775 Spring].

⁶⁹ Wood, *This Remote Part of the World*, p. 24, citing Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West*, pp. 15–16.

least in part because of deep misgivings about the expanding Argyll Estate in Knapdale and Kintyre in the 1730s. In the end, he made his peace with the powers that be, married some of his daughters to men who possessed some status in Arran, and as part of that accepted to a degree the political status quo and the increasing commercialism of the island, including early efforts to develop tourism.⁷⁰ The death of Hector McAllister's only son signalled the death of his American dream and the acceptance of his final destiny on Arran. From 1775, when he informed his brother that 'I must now drop all thoughts of going to Carolina', his correspondence instead returned to the subject of trying to realise some capital from his land in North Carolina that could be remitted to Scotland to help his family following the death of his son, an event that, he wrote, 'has prey'd much upon me to such degree that I find myself pretty failed.'⁷¹ Hector died at Brodick in 1792.

After the American War of Independence ended Hector had written to Alexander that 'all our friends in Argyle County are well. Many of our Cousins are in the East Indies and doing well, some of them expected home with fortunes.'⁷² There is no further reference to this in the correspondence but it indicates the different destinations available to elite migrants from Argyll in the aftermath of the war, and possibly Hector's own loss of interest in migration.⁷³ In Hector's last surviving letter, dated 30 April 1787, he reproached his brother for his failure to remit any capital or goods in payment for his lands in North Carolina. 'You was but young indeed when our Father and Mother died, and seems you have forgotten our Transactions at that time,' he wrote, and asked Alexander to 'act the part of a brother to me and my famylie.'⁷⁴ Hector died thinking of the land he owned in North Carolina and (implicitly) of the little that he owned in Scotland. Was he prevented from taking his Scottish family on his second emigration by events beyond his control, or did the strength of his family's attachment to Arran prevent them from ever sharing the hopes he held of a return to America that he had harboured for most of his life?

The records of the Hamilton estate that refer to Hector McAllister, unsurprisingly, do not relate to emigration. Without access to the North Carolina

⁷⁰ See M. C. Storrie, 'Landowning and Population in Arran &c', *Scottish Studies*, 11 (1967), pp. 135, 172–74.

⁷¹ NCDH, McAllister Family Papers, letter #43. Hector's 'father' [in-law] Fullarton of Corse is mentioned in this letter as standing security for a fishing company at Campbeltown in Kintyre in which Hector has invested: 'Our cousin Provost Peter Stuart of Campbeltown' had management of the company.

⁷² NCDH, McAllister Family Papers, letter #53, Hector McAllister to Alexander McAllister, 14 Feb. 1784.

⁷³ See A. MacKillop, 'Locality, Nations, and Empire: Scots and the Empire in Asia, c.1695–c.1813' in J. M. Mackenzie and T. M. Devine (eds), *Scotland and the British Empire* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 54–83; also see G. McGilvary, 'Return of the Scottish Nabob, 1725–1833' in Varricchio (ed.), *Back to Caledonia*, pp. 90–108.

⁷⁴ NCDH, McAllister Family Papers, letter #59, Hector McAllister to Alexander McAllister, 30 Apr. 1787.

archive, a historian of Scotland would never detect Hector's role in contemporary migration networks. If anything, from the few documentary references to Hector that survive in Scottish archives, he appears as an agent of economic improvement prospering through his privileged role as a tenant on a commercialised agrarian estate. Thorbjørn Campbell's recent history of Arran refers to him 'as a douce tenant on the Hamilton estate holding Glaster and Mony Quil farms.'⁷⁵ As discussed above, when the estate factor John Burrel divided the lands of Glencoy near Brodick traditionally held by the Fullarton family in 1773 into four farms, Hector was given East Glencoy, Allan Fullarton Mid Glencoy, and the other two tenants were McBrides.⁷⁶ Hector was married to a Fullarton, which may have influenced the estate to give him the lease (the previously undivided lands of Glencoy has been held by the Fullartons), yet at the same time, we now know from the McAllister correspondence in the North Carolina State Archives, he was planning to emigrate with his family. By 1815, when the Hamilton Estate's general enclosure plan was implemented, there was only a single tenant of Glencoy, Dr John Stoddart. By 1783 Hector and his family were living in Brodick at Spring Bank, a house he built opposite the landing place where the ferry from Ayrshire brought increasing numbers of tourists to the island.⁷⁷ When John Burrel formed a committee of residents to work for the improvement of Arran in 1770, Hector was a member, along with no fewer than three Fullartons, and he was identified as one of four members who 'were directly or indirectly employed' by Burrel.⁷⁸ So while Hector McAllister criticised the rise in rents and the increasingly assertive management of the Hamilton estate in his correspondence with his brother in America, he not only remained a tenant farmer in Scotland, but accepted estate employment, just as he had written to his brother of his hopes of obtaining 'a comission' to support his 'growing family.'⁷⁹ The chief matter discussed by Burrel's committee of 1770 was the question of a scheme for packet boats running between the island and Saltcoats, on the Ayrshire mainland opposite Arran.⁸⁰ When McAllister moved his family to Brodick into his new house at Springbank, he chose a site opposite the new ferry pier that had been built there.

The journal of a summer visit to Arran by the thirty-one-year-old Glasgow merchant Charles Hutcheson in 1783 contains several references to the McAllister family at 'Spring Bank', which at that time was not considered part of Brodick, situated as it was at a distance from the duke of Hamilton's castle there. The editor of the text of the journal published in 1919 provided information about the McAllister family, citing as his source 'Miss Stoddart' of Brodick, identified as a great-granddaughter of Hector 'M'Alister', who remembered his house near

⁷⁵ Campbell, *Arran*, p. 112.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

⁷⁷ Ker (ed.), 'Mr Hutcheson's "Journal", 1783', p. 92.

⁷⁸ MacBride, *Arran of the Bens*, p. 48.

⁷⁹ NCDAH, McAllister Family Papers, letter #5, Hector McAllister to Alexander McAllister, n.d. [catalogue gives date of 1761].

⁸⁰ MacBride, *Arran*, p. 48–9.

Brodict as ‘the old house now standing at the back of the Douglas Hotel [near the pier at Brodict].’ This suggests that one of Hector’s daughters had married the Dr John Stoddart who was tenant of Hector’s former farm at Glencoy by 1815. McAllister was said to have ‘had three small estates in Kintyre’ when he came to Monyquil in Arran before ‘he got a feu of Spring Bank and built the house there.’⁸¹ Hutcheson’s journal entry for 15 July records a jaunt through the centre of the island over the road west from Brodict along what is still known at ‘the string road’ on Arran ‘bye Mony-Quil [McAllister’s former farm] & the String.’⁸² He also recorded a further encounter with ‘the 2 Miss M’Alastirs of Springbank’ in which, as he put it, ‘I had the honor of footing it away [dancing] with one of the 2 Miss McAlastirs,’ writing that he had been told that they ‘were the very Gayest people in the Island & the Dukes of Hamilton when here frequently danced at their House & with “my partner”’.⁸³ At least some of Hector’s daughters were able to draw on their father’s status to make good marriages, and some remained on the island, the eldest (married to a ship’s captain) continuing to live at ‘Spring Bank’. Thus McAllister’s family remained part of the local elite on Arran despite his worries about their ability to maintain their social position in the midst of the social and economic changes that were transforming Arran. His daughters, however, did not marry landowners, and instead married men who rented land or houses from the Hamilton estate on the island.

How far the family Hector McAllister raised on Arran were part of this project to emigrate again we will never know. Although the rhetoric in his letters to his brother in North Carolina made some references to dissatisfaction with the privileges of the landed elite in Scotland and the Hamilton estate on Arran in particular, his migration decisions support the doubts Erickson expressed about too much reliance on market forces for labour and, in McAllister’s case, capital, as key factors in triggering migration. He was a young man when he joined his parents and younger siblings in their emigration to North Carolina, and his parents’ deaths propelled him into reversal of that emigration, leaving his siblings in the care of an aunt and uncle who remained with them, that would prove to determine the course of the rest of his life. The decisive factors in his ultimate decision not to migrate again were related to the fortunes of his nuclear family and, particularly, to another family death, this time of his only son. It is important to remember, however, that Hector McAllister played a significant role in preserving the ‘chain’ that linked Argyll (and Arran) with North Carolina in the years before the American Revolution, although clearly he was but one of the gentry ‘tacksman’ class in the Scottish Highlands who took an active interest in encouraging emigration from Scotland during those years.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Ker (ed.), ‘Mr Hutcheson’s “Journal”, 1783’, p. 92. Miss Stoddart was referred to as of ‘Strathwhillan’, which is a substantial house still standing in Brodict.

⁸² Ibid., p. 109.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 127.

⁸⁴ DeWolfe, *Discoveries*, pp. 27–37.

Barbara DeWolfe has pointed out that while Hector was not his brother's only correspondent in Scotland, he was the only one with sufficient access to finance to charter a ship that would provide transportation for people who would otherwise struggle to get passages to North Carolina from Scottish or Irish ports.⁸⁵ For Hector's brother Alexander, nevertheless, the correspondence was not just about encouraging more migrants to the Cape Fear Valley, even if they were from his own region of origin and shared his own languages, English and Gaelic, in what 'was far from being a transplanted Highland community.'⁸⁶ It was also about imagining the unification of a family broken apart both by migration and the early death of his and his siblings' parents. In the same letter that Alexander wrote in a particularly critical manner of his brother's hesitancy to emigrate again, he referred for the first and only occasion archived in the correspondence to their elder sister, the only sibling who remained in Scotland when the rest of the family emigrated to North Carolina in 1739. Hector had replied in 1771 to his brother that 'Our sister Anny is with the lady of Major Mulikin [Milliken] of Mulikan Hall, has 10 pounds sterling per annum, and clothes.'⁸⁷ Milliken Hall in Kilbarchan Parish Renfrewshire west of Glasgow and east of Greenock and Port Glasgow had been built by a West Indian plantation owner who had arrived in Glasgow in the 1720s from St Kitts and established himself as a member of the Glasgow merchant community in association with the McDowall family, who also owned property in Kilbarchan. No additional evidence has been identified that relates to the residence of the McAllister's elder sister with the family, but the Caribbean connection is intriguing. We know that one of the eventual leaders of the North Carolina emigration of 1739/1740 had travelled to the Caribbean

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 28–9.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 33.

⁸⁷ NCDAB, McAllister Family Papers, letter #21, Alexander McAllister to Hector McAllister, 29 Nov. – 6 Dec. 1770; letter #26, Hector McAllister to Alexander McAllister, 12 Sept. 1771. Ker (ed.), 'Mr Hutcheson's "Journal", 1783', p. 92, refers to a letter regarding the death of Hector's son Charles from Hector to his sister 'at Milliken by Glasgow' in 1774. Milliken Hall was in Kilbarchan parish in Renfrew. See Sir J. Sinclair (ed.), *Statistical Account of Scotland*, online edn, Kilbarchan, County of Renfrew, Account of 1791, 15, p. 486, <http://edina.ac.uk/stat-acc-scot/>, accessed 10 May 2012. Also see Hamilton, *Scotland the Caribbean and the Atlantic World*, p. 45, which records the Milliken family's links with the island of St Kitts in the Caribbean, as well as S. Nisbet, 'The Sugar Adventurers of Glasgow, 1640–1740' *History Scotland*, 9:3 (2009), pp. 28–33; and Nisbet, 'That Nefarious Commerce – St Kitts, Slavery and the West of Scotland', *Proceedings of the Society for Caribbean Studies*, 9 (2008), <http://www.caribbeanstudies.org.uk/papers/2008/olvol9p3.PDF>, accessed 19 July 2012. We have much to learn about the mercantile and migrant networks within which the McAllister migration was accomplished. A good starting point for the Scottish context is S. Murdoch, *Network North: Scottish Kin, Commercial and Covert Associations in Northern Europe 1603–1746* (Leiden, 2006). This has been followed up in a manner more relevant to the McAllister migration, although problematically, in J. Hutton, 'The Scottish Minor Elites: Their Scope and Limitations in an Age of Social Marginalisation. The Social Dimensions of Networking Space in the Eighteenth-Century Highland and Colonial Landscape' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Aberdeen, 2012).

in the 1720s in search of lands that could be taken up by tacksmen and small landowners in Kintyre and Knapdale such as the McAllisters.⁸⁸

The McAllister correspondence provides a detailed case study of the family and local detail that enabled 'the forging and maintenance of other networks by which chain migrations were planned and executed, resources exchanged, and families reunited.'⁸⁹ If the McAllister papers have been used 'to add colo[u]r to the old master narratives' of British and Scottish emigration to America, then careful preservation by generations of the McAllister family in North Carolina into the twentieth century is testimony to the power of emigrant correspondence in forming the social capital that Alexander McAllister created for his family in North Carolina by the end of the eighteenth century. As part of that process, this correspondence shares some characteristics with the British emigrant correspondence from the nineteenth century that Gerber consulted in an analysis of 'epistolary masquerades', concluding that 'ultimately [...] both falsehood and silence are evidence of the difficulties immigrants experienced in the sustaining of personal identities.'⁹⁰ Despite these difficulties, he concluded, emigrants 'continued to negotiate their correspondence with those significant others who were sources of continuity in lives disrupted by emigration.'⁹¹ The McAllister example also enables us to gain some insight into the process by which emigrant networks came to be forgotten or almost forgotten amongst the descendants of those who imagined emigration but never carried it out, or who were return migrants to Scotland, or who chose different destinations for migration. Hector's reference in a letter to his brother in 1784 to 'many of our cousins [...] in the East Indies and doing well' illustrates that options were increasing for those with the resources to access them as the British Empire became more emphatically global.⁹² Indeed, we are only just beginning to understand the impact of imperial expansion on Scottish emigration.⁹³ For the

⁸⁸ A. Murdoch (ed.), 'A Scottish Document concerning Emigration to North Carolina in 1772', *The North Carolina Historical Review*, 67, 4 (1990), p. 439.

⁸⁹ Gerber, *Authors of Their Lives*, p. 113.

⁹⁰ D. Gerber, 'Epistolary Masquerades: Acts of Deceiving and Withholding in Immigrant Litters' in B. Elliott et al (eds), *Letters across Borders*, p. 155.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² NCDAH, McAllister Family Papers, letter #53, Hector McAllister to Alexander McAllister, 14 Feb. 1784. For the general context of this reference in the McAllister correspondence see G. K. McGilvary, *East India Patronage and the British State: The Scottish Elite and Politics in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 2008); and McGilvary, 'Return of the Scottish Nabob', particularly his reference to the Campbells of Inverneil on p. 102 of that essay.

⁹³ See E. Rothschild, *The Inner Life of Empires: An Eighteenth Century History* (Princeton and Oxford, 2011) for an archival-based study of a Lowland Scottish family (the Johnstones of Westerhall) whose collective interests moved from the transatlantic to the global over the course of the eighteenth century. James Murray, who emigrated from the Ewes valley near Langholm not far from Westerhall at about the same time members of the Johnstone family left the same region, never returned to Britain, but instead left North Carolina to migrate again to New England when he sought a better climate in which his family could live. See Wood, *This Remote part of the World*, pp. 25–9, 92–3, 107–8, 129–30.

McAllister family, the ‘chain’ between Argyll and Arran with North Carolina remained a defining element of their lives during the eighteenth century, but the invisibility of that connection in Scottish archives and the survival of the correspondence that documents it in a US archive demonstrates the different priorities adopted by the descendants of those who created this particular transatlantic migration network. As Sarah Pearsall has remarked, ‘in order to remain connected, families told stories, in their correspondence and other places, about their continued affections, and the way that division would not alter family feelings.’⁹⁴ The McAllister correspondence was constructed around family feelings. It also became an important part of an information network that had a powerful influence on the development and growth of the traditions of migration that became so powerfully entrenched as part of Scottish life by the end of the eighteenth century. These were traditions that were evident in both the Highlands and the Lowlands, but perhaps particularly powerful where these two regions came together in the Firth of Clyde.

⁹⁴ S. M. S. Pearsall, *Atlantic Families: Lives and Letters in the Later Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2008), p. 240.